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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Note verbale dated 4 February 1993 from the Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva, addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents its compliments to the Centre for Human Rights and has the honour to transmit herewith the monthly report on Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories for December 1992. The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States wishes to express its grave concern at the deterioration in the situation of Arab civilians in the territories occupied by Israel, as detailed in the attached report. The Mission requests the Centre for Human Rights to regard this report as an official document and to distribute it to the members of the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-ninth session.

Report on Israeli settlement operations and attacks on Arab citizens and their property in December 1992

A real wartime atmosphere prevailed in the occupied Palestinian territories during the last month of 1992 and all the Palestinian territories were converted into a military barracks filled with thousands of Israeli troops who launched an urban war against the defenceless population. The month also witnessed a number of anniversaries, such as the anniversary of the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada which has entered its sixth year, the anniversary of the foundation of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and the anniversary of the beginning of the Palestinian Revolution which is celebrated every year on the evening of 1 January.

On the anniversary of the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada, the occupied territories seethed with Palestinian anger and most of the Palestinian towns and camps witnessed popular demonstrations reminiscent of the early days of the intifada. In spite of the full blockade and the curfew that were imposed on the occupied Gaza Strip, the Strip in general, and Jabalia and Khan Yunis camps in particular, witnessed an escalation in mass intifada-related activities which prompted many observers and commentators, both Palestinian and Israeli, to conclude that the sixth year of the intifada would be marked by a significant transformation, the first indications of which had begun to appear during its first days. In an address delivered in the city of Jerusalem, Shimon Peres, the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, admitted that what he referred to as the "violence" in the occupied territories would continue until a political solution had been found, since the Palestinian intifada was an expression of the conflict that had existed for decades. (Al-Quds newspaper, 13/12/1992)

The severe repressive military measures taken by Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, in the face of the escalating Palestinian struggle in the occupied territories reflected the erratic nature of the Labour Party Government which, being burdened by its militarist history and its leader's past record as the initiator of the "iron fist" policy, is totally incapable of maintaining its deceptive peace-loving profile in the eyes of the international community and world public opinion. The Government's decision to expel 413 Palestinians from their homeland constituted the harshest of these measures and was condemned by the United Nations, the United States of America, the European Community and all countries of the world.

The decision to expel those Palestinians who, according to the Israeli occupation authorities, are members of the Hamas movement was taken on 17 December 1992 and, within a few hours, troops rounded up all the deportees from their homes, places of work and Israeli prisons and detention centres, blindfolded them, bound their hands with plastic handcuffs and forced them into buses which were then dispatched towards the frontier between Lebanon and occupied Palestine. This expulsion operation, which is unprecedented from the standpoint of the number of the deportees, has become the focal point of international concern, particularly since the adoption of Security Council resolution 799 (1992) which demanded that Israel ensure the safe and immediate return to the occupied territories of all those deported and reaffirmed the applicability of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem.

In the face of mounting Palestinian protests, the military authorities intensified their repressive measures and imposed a full curfew. Occupation forces carried out large-scale searches for so-called "wanted" persons in Palestinian houses and also in mosques in the Gaza Strip, during which they assaulted Arab citizens and wreaked havoc in the houses where they destroyed items of furniture. During this campaign of mass arrests, more than 2,200 citizens were detained, particularly those suspected of being members of the Islamic movements.

During the month, occupation forces searching for "wanted" persons fired armour-piercing rockets at Palestinian houses, which were thereby rendered

uninhabitable. One house, in which a "wanted" person was living, was bombarded with these rockets, as a result of which it was burnt, together with its occupants.

According to Israeli sources, the Army Command has amended its instructions concerning the use of firearms in the occupied territories in such a way as to permit troops to open fire on all demonstrators without exception and without warning. There are no longer any instructions whatsoever concerning the arrest of suspects. Under the new instructions, troops are ordered to open fire immediately, aiming primarily at the upper part of the body with intent to kill rather than to wound. Human rights organizations have noted an increase in the number of persons shot and killed by Israeli marksmen, particularly at Khan Yunis where about 10 persons were killed in this way.

The Israeli authorities continued their daily encroachments on Arab land and their acts of aggression against the Arab population. From the beginning of the Israeli occupation to the end of 1992, the authorities have confiscated a total of 3,077,364 dunums of land in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also proceeded with their desperate attempts to promote settlement and have prepared plans to encourage Jewish immigrants to settle in the 186 settlements in the West Bank and the 20 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

With regard to violations of the freedoms and human rights of the population, the Israeli authorities continued to implement their inhuman policies and imposed individual and collective punishments, as illustrated by the sentences passed on 198 residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip who appeared before the military courts. The sentences ranged from imprisonment for a few months to several years, with heavy fines. The authorities placed 11 persons in administrative detention for periods ranging from 5 to 6 months and demolished 16 houses. Twenty-four Palestinians were killed and hundreds were injured.

The following details concerning acts of aggression were reported in the Arabic and Hebrew press and information media:

I. Confiscation of land and settlement

The Land Research Committee of the Arab Studies Society at Jerusalem published a statistical abstract on the expansion of a number of settlements in the occupied territories, according to which 35 settlements had been expanded through the annexation of an additional area of 16,245 dunums since the beginning of 1992. Although the Rabin Government's electoral manifesto promised a freeze on settlement activity, there are indications that existing settlements have continued to expand at the expense of Palestinian land. Since the Madrid Conference in 1991, five settlements have been built on an area of 2,857 dunums of land. (Al-Usbu' al-Jadid, 20/12/1992)

In a measure that ran counter to the earlier undertakings of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, it was decided to continue granting financial concessions to 16 settlements in the Gaza Strip and also to the settlements in the "Gush Etzion" area, the settlement of "Efrat" and five other settlements to the south of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 3/12/1992)

During the month, the Knesset's Financial Committee approved the draft general budget for 1993 in which 100 million shekels are allocated to the settlement groupings in the Golan, the Jordan Valley, the West Bank and the "Gush Katif" area in the Gaza Strip. (Al-Fajr, 28/12/1992)

II. Attacks on Arab citizens and their property

During the month, occupation forces raided a number of houses on the pretext of searching for "wanted" persons. These raids, which normally take place late at night, are accompanied by beatings, humiliations and the overturning and destruction of house furniture. The young men and other citizens are usually assembled and made to stand for hours in the open air in bitterly cold temperatures before their identity cards are taken from them prior to their interrogation.

These acts of aggression against Arab citizens and their property and lands are illustrated by the following:

Occupation forces sealed off the area around Am'ari camp, carried out large-scale searches of houses and subjected the population to severe beatings. (Al-Fajr, 3/12/1992)

Occupation troops opened fire on 10 young men at Jabalia camp, who suffered wounds ranging from medium to serious. (Al-Sha'ab, 5/12/1992)

Members of the Border Police forced their way into the Mustafa Hafiz preparatory school at Khan Yunis camp where they fired shots at teachers and pupils. (Al-Ittihad, 6/12/1992)

An Israeli patrol stormed the village of Jalama and subjected its young male residents to severe beatings. (Al-Ittihad, 6/12/1992)

Jewish settlers fired shots at young men in Jalazone camp. (Al-Fajr, 7/12/1992)

Troops raided the village of Burqin, where they forced their way into many houses and beat up their occupants. (Al-Fajr, 7/12/1992)

Occupation troops broke up a popular demonstration in the town of Gaza, injuring a number of citizens. (Al-Ittihad, 8/12/1992)

Israeli forces stormed a school for boys at Turmusaiya/Ramallah. (Al-Sha'ab, 9/12/1992)

Occupation forces stormed the Saadiya Secondary School at Qalqiliya, where they used tear-gas to expel the students. (Al-Sha'ab, 9/12/1992)

An Israeli settler fired shots at the teachers' room at Jalazone Preparatory School for Boys. (Al-Sha'ab, 11/12/1992)

Israeli military forces raided Khan Yunis camp, where they forced all the residents to leave their houses and assemble in the main square. (Al-Quds, 12/12/1992)

Occupation troops opened fire on residents of the Gaza Strip, wounding 30 persons at Jabalia camp, 33 in the town of Gaza, 15 in the towns of Rafah and Khan Yunis and 15 in the camps in the central area. (Al-Quds, 13/12/1992)

A group of settlers from the Jewish quarter of Hebron attacked the fruit and vegetable market, where they assaulted Arab tradesmen. (Al-Quds, 14/12/1992)

The military authorities closed down the Al-Abbas mosque in the Rimal district of Gaza. (Al-Quds, 15/12/1992)

The Israeli authorities prohibited Arab citizens from overtaking military vehicles at night on roads in the occupied territories. (Al-Quds, 15/12/1992)

The military authorities raided the large Al-Umari mosque in the town of Gaza, in which they carried out a thorough search. (Al-Quds, 15/12/1992)

A woman and a child were knocked down and injured by a military vehicle in the town of Nablus. (Al-Ittihad, 15/12/1992)

The Israeli authorities prohibited residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from travelling across the two bridges on Wednesday, 16 December 1992. (Al-Nahar, 16/12/1992)

Occupation forces searching for a "wanted" person threw percussion grenades into a house belonging to a resident of the town of Nablus, as a result of which the house burnt down. (Al-Quds, 17/12/1992).

The Israeli authorities closed down the Al-Amoud mosque in the town of Nablus for a period of one month. (Al-Quds, 19/12/1992)

The Israeli authorities prevented young men under 40 years of age from entering the Al-Aqsa mosque to pray. (Al-Nahar, 19/12/1992)

Military forces raided the Al-Rahma mosque at Khan Yunis in which they fired shots, wounding 19 young men. (Al-Ittihad, 21/12/1992)

Dozens of soldiers forced their way into the Salahuddin School in the town of Dura/Hebron, in which they beat up the students and fired shots which wounded two of them. (Al-Quds, 26/12/1992)

Large detachments of Border Police raided Jenin camp, subjected all its residents to severe beatings and forced them to leave their homes and sit in open areas in the rain and bitterly cold temperature. (Al-Ittihad, 29/12/1992)

Encroachments on land

The Israeli authorities are engaging in the most odious forms of encroachment on Arab land. Troops are levelling areas of land along the main highways and roads leading to the settlements in order to protect Israeli vehicles and settlers are uprooting fruit-bearing trees situated in the vicinity of their settlements. Although it is the harvest season, Arab

citizens are being prevented, at gunpoint, from gaining access to their lands in order to gather the fruit harvest. The purpose of this is to inflict the greatest possible losses on the Palestinian economy and induce citizens to abandon their land.

These Israeli encroachments are illustrated by the following:

Settlers uprooted a number of olive trees at the village of Deir Sama'an/Nablus. (Al-Ittihad, 13/12/1992)

Settlers from the settlement of "Tapuah" uprooted 15 almond and olive trees at the village of Yasuf/Nablus. (Al-Nahar, 31/12/1992)

III. Israeli practices in violation of human rights in the occupied territories

1. Arrests

(a) Mass arrests

Occupation forces acting under instructions from Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin launched a large-scale campaign of arrests in which thousands of Palestinians were detained in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The number of Palestinians detained during the first few days of December amounted to more than 2,000. These mass arrests in December 1992 are illustrated by the following examples:

Incident	Source
3 young men arrested in the village of Qaffin/Tulkarm	Al-Ittihad, 4/12/1992
5 persons arrested in the village of Burqin	Al-Ittihad, 6/12/1992
3 persons arrested in the town of Bira	Al-Ittihad, 7/12/1992
35 persons arrested in the village of Bani Na'im	Al-Ittihad, 8/12/1992
4 young men arrested in the village of Arraba	Al-Ittihad, 8/12/1992
Several arrested at Qalqiliya	Al-Ittihad, 10/12/1992
3 young men arrested in the town of Nablus	Al-Ittihad, 10/12/1992
5 young men arrested in the town of Rafah	Al-Quds, 11/12/1992
12 persons arrested in the Gaza Strip	Al-Quds, 11/12/1992
60 persons arrested at Qalqiliya	Al-Ittihad, 14/12/1992
5 persons arrested at Ramallah	Al-Ittihad, 14/12/1992
10 persons arrested in the village of Anza	Al-Ittihad, 14/12/1992

Incident	Source
70 persons arrested at Shu'fat camp	Al-Quds, 26/12/1992
3 young men arrested at Balata camp	Al-Quds, 26/12/1992
1,600 persons arrested in the West Bank and Gaza Strip	Al-Quds, 17/12/1992

(b) Administrative detention

According to Israeli military sources, 223 Palestinians were held in administrative detention during the year. Israeli sources also reported that those detainees constituted about 3 per cent of the total number of prisoners.

However, the Bar Association at Gaza indicated that the number of Palestinians held in administrative detention in December 1992 far exceeded the figure recently announced in the press reports.

According to the Association, the number of persons held in administrative detention during the month amounted to 570, i.e. an increase of 300 over and above the last statistics for November 1992 which indicated that the number of administrative detainees amounted to 260. The Association published a list containing the names of 53 administrative detainees from the Gaza Strip who were detained on 14 and 15 December 1992 for periods ranging from 2 to 6 months. (Al-Quds, 4/1/1992)

During the month, the Israeli authorities placed 11 persons in administrative detention (reported in editions of Al-Quds newspaper from 2 to 31 December 1992). The periods of detention involved normally range from one month to a whole year, subject to extension.

(c) Sentences passed on Arab citizens

In December 1992, 198 Palestinians appeared before Israeli military courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The prison sentences handed down ranged from 7 to 12 months without probation (with suspended sentences of double that period) to many years. (Source: editions of Al-Quds newspaper from 2 to 31 December 1992). Sentences of life imprisonment were passed on three Palestinians. In addition to the prison sentences, an average fine of 1,000 shekels was imposed on each convicted person. The total of these fines was estimated at about 112,350 Israeli shekels, i.e. about US$ 40,854.

(d) Conditions of detention and ill-treatment of detainees

According to information received from Hebron prison, the conditions of detention in the prison are deteriorating in spite of the promises made by the prison administration in order to halt the general strike declared by Palestinian detainees in October 1992, which lasted for 17 days. Consequently, the detainees at Hebron prison were forced to engage in a series of protests, including hunger strikes and a refusal to receive family visits, against that policy.

The detainees are suffering from the measures taken by the prison administration, which is rejecting all the prisoners' demands for an improvement in the quality of their food and in the prison heating system.

Lawyers practising in the military courts in the occupied territories have also referred to the policy of reprisals that is being pursued against participants in the intifada. In fact, the courts are imposing heavy penalties for violations of the firearms regulations and participation in intifada-related activities (offenders are sentenced to a minimum term of 18 months' imprisonment, in addition to fines and suspended sentences).

2. Restrictions on freedom of movement and travel

The occupation authorities imposed a full military blockade on the Gaza Strip for a period of 15 consecutive days and on the towns and camps in the West Bank for a period of 10 days.

At the beginning of the month, a curfew was imposed on the districts of Rafah and Khan Yunis, including their camps and villages, and also on Bureij, Nuseirat, Shati' and Jabalia camps and the villages of Beit Hanun and Beit Lahiya and the district of Sheikh Ridhwan. At the end of the month, on the anniversary of the foundation of "Fatah", a curfew was imposed on all parts of the Gaza Strip.

In the West Bank, Qalqiliya was declared a closed military zone and military roadblocks were set up on the approaches to the town. The town of Nablus was also declared a closed military zone and the towns, villages and camps in the West Bank were placed under curfew for several days.

3. Demolition of houses

Occupation forces fired anti-tank rockets at a house at Deir al-Balah, as a result of which it was totally gutted by fire, when they suspected that "wanted" persons were living in it. (Al-Quds, 13/12/1992)

At Khan Yunis, occupation forces bombarded a number of houses with rocket-propelled grenades, which caused considerable damage. Troops invested the area, assembled the population in an outlying square and then fired rocket-propelled grenades which demolished the homes of the following persons:

1. Salih Musa Jabbour
2. Ziyad Musa Jabbour
3. Fathi Musa Jabbour
4. Salah Jabbour
5. Shakir Jabbour
6. Hammada Jabbour

The following list gives the names of the persons whose houses were demolished in December 1992, as well as the location of the house and the reason for its demolition.

No.	Name of owner of house	Location	Reason for demolition	Source of report
1.	Azmi Abdul Jawad Us'eid	Jerusalem	No building permit	Al-Fajr, 3/12/1992
2.	Talal Mithqal Ali Taha	Biddiya	No building permit	Al-Quds, 4/12/1992
3.	Ibrahim al-Dahdur	Jiftlik	No building permit	Al-Quds, 4/12/1992
4.	Abdullah Mahmoud Abul Sheikh	Ubeidiya	No building permit	Al-Nahar, 4/12/1992
5.	Youssuf Khalil Ahmad al-Zir	Harmala/ Bethlehem	No building permit	Al-Quds, 5/12/1992
6.	Samir Mazyad Salih al-Sheikh	Azzun	No building permit	Al-Quds, 6/12/1992
7.	Aziz Musa Barahima	Anza	Security reasons	Al-Ittihad, 13/12/1992
8.	Ibrahim Musa Armin	Shu'fat	No building permit	Al-Quds, 14/12/1992
9.	Ayish Youssuf Uthman	Illar	No building permit	Al-Quds, 23/12/1992
10.	Abdullah Ali Abu Hafiza	Illar	No building permit	Al-Quds, 23/12/1992

The number of houses demolished by Israeli army bulldozers in the month of December therefore amounts to 16.

The authorities also sealed up two houses belonging to the following persons:

Name	Location	Source
Abdullah Hassan Mustafa	Beit Inan/Ramallah	Al-Fajr, 22/12/1992
Abdul Hamid Awda Arfan	Kafr Ain/Ramallah	Al-Quds, 23/12/92

4. Martyrs

The annual report of the Israeli Information Centre on Human Rights in the occupied territories indicated that there had been an increase in the number of Palestinians shot and killed by Israeli troops. Six Palestinians were shot and killed by Israeli forces at Khan Yunis on a single day and 30 others suffered severe gunshot wounds.

The authorities committed that massacre at Khan Yunis solely with a view to killing Arab citizens. UNRWA sources described the incident as follows: "The soldiers took up provocative positions among the population, ordered them to return to their homes within five minutes and, immediately afterwards, opened fire simultaneously from all their positions with deliberate intent to kill Arab citizens. They killed a young girl who was standing at the door of her house, as well as two brothers standing on the balcony of their house, and another person who was travelling inside an ambulance. According to hospital

sources, more than 40 persons were wounded in the head, chest and abdomen as a result of the random shooting". (Al-Ittihad, 20/12/1992)

With regard to the incident in which the child Amjad Abdul Razzaq was killed, the journalist Tell Edmon wrote an article in the newspaper Davar in which he said: "It is easy to kill an Arab child. Since the outbreak of the intifada, 186 children under 16 years of age have been shot and killed by Israeli troops and none of them were carrying weapons or in a position to endanger the life of a soldier ... According to Amjad's nephew, the child had not even thrown a stone when he was shot in the back from a distance of 15 m. The military inquiry showed that the officer had acted contrary to orders and could have captured the children who were throwing stones without using his weapon." (Al-Dustur, 15/12/1992)

In the month of December 1992, 24 Palestinians were killed by Israeli military forces and their special units, thereby bring the total number of martyrs killed since the beginning of the Palestinian intifada in 1987 to 1,341. The following list gives the names of the martyrs who died in December 1992.

No.	Name of martyr	Age	Place of residence	Cause of death	Source of report
1.	Amer Youssuf Abu Sharkh	12	Gaza	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 2/12/1992
2.	Khalid Mahmoud al-Ustadh	21	Gaza	Died of wounds	Al-Quds, 3/12/1992
3.	Abdul Rahman Ribhi Mansour	16	Balata camp	Detonation of explosive charge	Al-Quds, 4/12/1992
4.	Isam Mustafa Barbakh	16	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 9/12/1992
5.	Hazim Ahmad al-Zabbun	17	Beit Sahur	Died of wounds	Al-Quds, 9/12/1992
6.	Salih Murtadha Freihat	15	Yamun	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 10/12/1992
7.	Naji Sulaiman Abul-Naja	15	Rafah	Shot by soldiers	Al-Fajr, 10/12/1992
8.	Isam Aziz Musa Barahima	24	Anza	Armed confrontation	Al-Quds, 12/12/1992
9.	Ammar Faiz Shakir Sidr	17	Hebron	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 12/12/1992
10.	Khalid Muhammad al-Askari	27	Jabalia camp	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 13/12/1992
11.	Hassan Khadour	24	Bani Na'im	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 13/12/1992
12.	Shaaban Abdul Fattah Abu Iyada	22	Nuseirat camp	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 14/12/1992
13.	Rizq Salah al-Fara	22	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992

No.	Name of martyr	Age	Place of residence	Cause of death	Source of report
14.	Wa'il Muhammad al-Qaisi	20	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992
15.	Rana Tharwat Abu Tair	9	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992
16.	Naji Shaaban al-Najjar	22	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992
17.	Adil Muhammad Abu Hadayid	23	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992
18.	Mahir Umran	30	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 20/12/1992
19.	Umar Said Ali Banat	19	Arroub camp	Shot by soldiers	Al-Ittihad, 20/12/1992
20.	Amin Subhi Abu Amer	11	Khan Yunis	Gunshot wound	Al-Quds, 22/12/1992
21.	Muhammad Salim Muslim Abu Musa	17	Khan Yunis	Died of wounds	Al Quds, 22/12/1992
22.	Muhammad Khamis Abidin	30	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 24/12/1992
23.	Ismail Khamis Abidin	27	Khan Yunis	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 24/12/1992
24.	Muhammad Za'tar	15	Shati' camp	Shot by soldiers	Al-Quds, 27/12/1992

5. Violations against educational institutions

Israeli forces erected military roadblocks on all the approaches to Bethlehem University. They prevented vehicles from entering the campus and also prevented students from the Gaza Strip from entering and pursuing their studies on the pretext that they had not obtained permits to enter the West Bank.

The following list gives the names of the schools that were closed down in December 1992.

Name of school	Location	Duration of closure	Source of report
King Ghazi Secondary School	Biddu	One day	Al-Fajr, 11/12/1992
Saadiya Boys' Secondary School	Qalqiliya	10-25/12/1992, subsequently extended to the end of the first academic term	Al-Quds, 12/12/1992